

CHINESE WISTERIA

WISTERIA SINENSIS

Chinese wisteria, *Wisteria sinensis*, is a long-lived woody vine that has been planted in North America as an ornamental. Although the blossoms are pretty and have a sweet smell, this vine is invasive and kills trees by girdling them. It can tolerate shade, but needs at least partial sun to flower.

Identification

Wisteria produces blue or violet dangling racemes of flowers early in the spring as foliage emerges. Foliage occurs alternately on the vine, each leaf compound with seven to 13 leaflets. The vine is woody.

How it spreads

Wisteria forms long vines that wind counterclockwise around tree trunks to move up into the canopy. Wisteria can also form runners along the ground surface. Seeds can be moved with flowing water to colonize downstream from an initial infestation.

Managing wisteria

Do not plant wisteria. Cut back vines as soon as they leaf out in the spring and continue doing so until the roots are depleted and are no longer able to produce vines or foliage. Application of herbicides such as triclopyr and glyphosate directly to cut tissue is also very effective.

Contact information

If you would like more information on wisteria, contact David Jenkins at the SC Forestry Commission at djenkins@scfc.gov or contact the Clemson Invasive Species Program at <https://www.clemson.edu/public/regulatory/plant-protection/invasive/>.

For information on how you can combat invasive plants in your community or to identify native alternatives to plant instead of exotics, visit the South Carolina Exotic Pest Plant website at <https://www.se-eppc.org/southcarolina/> or send an email to southcarolinaeppc@gmail.com.



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